

805 the first days of October. "Canopus has shown himself; well,
 132 then, let us go into the inner desert; *ṭala'at as-shejl nušarrez*,"
 is now the cry of the Bedouins, who, leaving the borders of the
 settled and cultivated districts, wander with all their posses-
 sions into the interior of the desert in search of pastures.
 Canopus reigns for forty nights, after which the Pleiades,
ṭrajja, take the helm for twenty-five nights, *ṭrūwi*, to be
 followed by Gemini, *ḡawza*, for an equal period. Thus the
 reign of Canopus, the Pleiades, and Gemini lasts ninety days
 in all—three months—and this season of the year is called
aṣ-ṣferi, corresponding approximately to October, November,
 and December. Next, the star Sirius, *aš-ša'era*, rules for forty
 nights; this season of the year is called *aš-šta*. For fifty
 nights after Sirius the ruler is Arcturus, *as-smāk*, but in the
 middle of our April the reign of the stars ends, as then the
 summer, *aṣ-ṣejf*, appears, which lasts to about the beginning
 of June and is succeeded by the dry season, *al-kéz*, extending
 over four months, to about the first days of October. The
 Bedouin knows, therefore, five seasons of the year: *aṣ-ṣferi*,
 ninety nights (from the beginning of October to the beginning
 of January); *aš-šta* forty nights (to about February 20), followed
 by a period sometimes called the second part of *aš-šta*, ending
 about March 4; *as-smāk*, fifty nights (to the middle of April);
aṣ-ṣejf, to the beginning of June, and the four months of *al-kéz*.
 The common Bedouin is quite ignorant of any other di-
 vision of the year.

821 The rains are divided by the Bedouin into *al-waṣm*, *aš-*
 132 *šitwi*, *as-smāk*, and *aṣ-ṣejfi*. The first includes the rains of
as-shejlāwi, *aṭ-ṭrūwi*, and *al-ḡōzāwi*, i. e. the rains of Canopus,
 the Pleiades, and Gemini, or the *aṣ-ṣferi* or autumnal rains.

[22] As soon as Canopus appears, the Bedouins leave their camps,
 pitched in the valleys and the broad dried-up river beds, which
 are often over two hundred kilometers long. After copious

[31] rains have fallen at the heads of these valleys, the water
 rushes wild'y through the channels, washing away the camps
 and drowning both the people and their herds; hence the

• [45] proverb: "When Canopus rises, trust not the creek and gather
 dates even at night; *ilja ṭala'at as-shejl lá tāmēn as-sejl wa-*
tlaṣṣimes at-tamr bel-lejl," because at that period the dates are
 ripe and no selecting is needed. The *shejlāwi* rain is also called

132 *al-herfi* (or *al-herfi*). If the ground is thoroughly soaked with
 137 it, *arṣ mauṣūma 'alejha-l-herfi*, there soon appear on all sides

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themselves with grain. Our Šammari can therefore meet his
Rwala maid, Zahra, only in the inner desert, šerk. Women
fond of dress dye their hair yellow with henna.

831^k
539^k
[302]

Fāferi tazla' al-jowm min riḡlaha
jā ba'ad iādelen karḡabaw haḡlaha.

My old she-camel with her hind leg lame today,
Oh, may she live longer than she with hair clipped
above her brows and ankle rings clashing together.

Ajj as-samar walla'-l-bajaz
low čent ani 'aššākeh
hebb as-samar helwt al-ḡowf
lā wa' hani min zākeh.

Whether black or white,
If I were only his sweetheart!
The kisses of a negro are like the *helwa* dates from
al-Ḡowf;
Truly, much relish to one who has tasted them.

A paramour was reproached with having been intimate
with a negro; she answered with the ditty just cited, which
is very popular, especially with the negroes.

Helwa is the most delicious variety of dates raised in
the basin al-Ḡowf. Some of these dates are as much as five
centimeters long and two centimeters thick; they are black
with a bluish tinge.

[245]

1. *Naffajt rās al-'abd w-lā šufet al-ašbās*
w-lā ḡāni min maḡnūn 'ajni munābi
2. *mā šufet šurḡijje w-lā šufet al-awnās*
min dān maḡnūni teldā'-s-serdābi
3. *hani lowni līl-ma'ālik fattās*
w-alli bḡalib qwejhebi miḡl mā bi.

1. The summit of al-'Abd I climbed, but saw no herds,
Nor did any one come to bring word to me from the
one for whom my eyes watch.
2. No travelers, no man at all I sighted;
Between me and my ward a mirage quivers.
3. Oh, may he who examines the heart bring my desires
to a good issue,
[Allāh] who dwells in my mistress' heart and in mine too.